

THE PUBLIC FORUM

MR. CITIZEN—Just a word with you today, if you are not too busy. Did you know that the health dept's physicians during 1916 made 191,225 physical examinations of school children. Of these, 101,237 were found with defects of various kinds; and of this number, 88,014 were advised to seek medical treatment. This means that a note was sent to the parents apprising them of their children's conditions and urging that they consult their family physicians.

Also did you know, Mr. Citizen, that among the defects found there were 11,793 children with defective eyesight and that 3,191 were found with other diseases of the eye, making a total of 13,984 children whose eyes needed expert care and attention.

Eyesight is a most precious thing, Mr. Citizen. It means everything to man, woman or child who is able to see perfectly.

Then, it may interest you, Mr. Citizen, to know that 21,690 children were found with diseased glands; 31,643 were found with diseased tonsils; 14,263 with adenoids, and 663 with defective hearing, caused by diseased ears.

Now, Mr. Citizen, the pathetic thing about this little story we want to tell you today is that while the health department has done its work, we'll say intelligently and conscientiously, yet the parents of these children that were found suffering from these ailments noted did not respond to the advice and warning given to have them corrected; in fact, the percentage of corrections secured was so small as to amount almost to nothing. All this is very discouraging, Mr. Citizen. What do you think about it? Is there not some way that you might help to get better results? There certainly must be. And here is the suggestion that is offered for your best consideration.

Some time ago the commissioner

of health, acting with Dr. A. A. O'Neill, president of the Chicago Medical society, appointed a committee of medical experts to study this whole question of the physical health of school children and to devise ways and means by which better co-operation could be secured with the parents of the children in a work that means so much for the children's physical health and well being. It would seem, Mr. Citizen, that you should get behind a movement of this kind; that you should be deeply interested in it and willing to help the commissioner of health and the medical profession of Chicago to conserve in every way known to modern medical science the health of the school children of Chicago.

What will you do about it?—Chicago Health Department.

CONCERNING OFFICE EMPLOYEES.—"One of the Thousand State Street Girls" suggests that department store employes be organized. Not only should these people be organized, but also the 101 other different groups of unorganized workers, among them the 50,000 office employes in Chicago. Almost every day we hear or read of the different labor unions—janitors, street car men, garment workers, mine workers, and many others too numerous to mention—but very little or nothing is said about organizing the office employes.

Are the working conditions of office employes so satisfactory that it is unnecessary for them to organize and demand something better, and are their wages (pardon me, salaries) enough to keep them well above the starvation line? In my opinion they are not like other workers, they are employed by the ruling class.

The office workers in Chicago receive on the average a lower wage than any other group of workers in the city, with the exception of the garment workers, the department